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ABSTRACT

This test was designed primarily for the purpose of assisting social psychologists in researching sex roles and/or sex differences when a nonverbal instrument is desired. The hypothesis was that some objects would be easier for members of one gender to name. The subjects were 30 female and 20 male undergraduate students. Pictures of 65 commercial objects from mail order and showroom catalogs were utilized. The pictures were flashed onto a screen for 12 seconds; subjects were to write the object names on recording sheets. Through percentage item analysis certain objects were clearly found to be more easily identified by one sex. Pictures of objects associated with food and social beverage preparation were better identified by women while men were more familiar with the names of repair tools. From this analysis, two forms of the test were developed (male or female-appropriate), with 12 items each in a paper and pencil format, as a nonverbal instrument. Samples of the test are included. (SM)

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Gender Object Identification Test

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Special thanks to Dr. Rhoda K. Unger for advice and encouragement.

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Abstract

Work was done to develop the Gender Object Identification Test (GOIT) because sex roles appear to be changing and only verbal measures of sex-appropriateness existed. Subjects were 50 college students, 30 female. Pictures of objects associated with food plus social beverage preparation were better identified by women while men knew names of repair tools better. Two forms were developed (male- and female-appropriate) with 12 items each in a paper and pencil format as a nonverbal instrument. Perhaps the current predominant emphasis on a non-sexist school curriculum will cause sex roles and social sex differences to become less distinct and make the GOIT a less viable instrument for American culture. This test should be used judiciously because of the population sampled.

Gender Object Identification Test

There was no known test already in existence which could be used for sex-appropriateness in terms of objects, although there were a few which presumed to measure masculine and feminine roles verbally. One by Deaux and Bieri (1967) used examples such as "smokes a pipe" and "likes to knit", and these were used to examine value judgements. Because of the author's belief that sex roles appear to be in a state of flux, this test was developed to help examine gender identification via objects. The hypothesis was that some objects would be easier for members of one gender to name, and this is the operational basis for the proposed sex-appropriate object.

Method

Subjects. The subjects were 50 undergraduates, 20 male, from two educational psychology classes at a northeastern New Jersey state college who were invited to participate in a social psychology experiment. After being told this research would be quick, convenient (in their classroom), anonymous, private, and non-threatening, every invited student-subject agreed to participate.

Procedure. Pictures of 65 commercial objects from mail order and showroom catalogs were utilized. Subjects were told that pictures of 65 "common" objects were to be flashed via opaque projector onto a screen for 12 seconds each and they were to write the object names on the recording sheets provided. After all were shown, subjects were requested to write on their papers what

they thought was the purpose of the research. Finally, subjects were asked to record their gender (all did).

Results

Through percentage item analysis certain objects were clearly found to be more easily identified by one sex. Women were better able

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Insert Table 1 about here

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to name objects associated with food and social beverage preparation, while men were usually superior at naming repair tools. Consumer electronic appliances, sporting goods, furniture, and other large ordinary household items were identified correctly by almost every subject. Some smaller objects were, percentage-wise, equally identified by gender but by fewer individuals; e.g., razor knife and cuticle (manicuring) scissors, by approximately 2/3 and 1/5 of both groups, respectively. Objects revealing the largest differences are: electric wok where 55% of the women knew what it was called while not a single man did; and hex (key or Allen) wrenches where 80% of the males and only 13.3% of the females knew it.

The experimenter categorized subjects' replies as to the possible purpose of this project into 7 basic areas. Sixteen

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Insert Table 2 about here

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females correctly thought it was for work in sex roles/stereotypes, while only four men did. Nine males presumed general knowledge was sought. The other 5 categories have few responses.

Discussion of Test Forms

The Gender Object Identification Test (GOIT) developed from this study has two forms, either predominantly male-appropriate (Form A) or female-appropriate (Form B). The GOIT is of paper and pencil format with 12 items per form.

Insert Figures 1 and 2 about here

Items with the greatest difference in percentage by sex were chosen for use as sex-appropriate. There are also two neutral objects on the same place on both forms of this test, two reversed items on the same locations on both forms, and eight male and eight female items used only on one form in similar spaces. Neutrality was determined by almost all subjects of both sexes scoring almost the exact percentage of correct responses on these two objects. A reversal is an object that was determined to be sex-appropriate for one sex, but is used on the form dominated by objects that are sex-appropriate for the other. The two neutral objects and the two reversals were added for noise functions.

Instructions for this test call for brief, specific identification of all objects. For instance, use frying pan instead of pot, or flathead screwdriver and not tool.

When a male is administered Form B or a female Form A, this constitutes the use of the sex-inappropriate version.

Conclusion

This test was designed primarily for the purpose of assisting social

psychologists in doing research on sex roles and/or sex differences when a nonverbal instrument is desired. Perhaps as more girls take shop courses in school and assume more non-traditionally female professions, such as electronic technician, the marked differences that enabled this test to be constructed will become blurred. Boys taking more home economics classes will also accelerate the trend. However, it must be kept in mind that this was a small, specific sample which makes generalizing risky. Yet, even if this becomes, by and large, obsolete within our culture, it could continue to be useful as an individual personality/projective measure or even used for cross-cultural studies.

Reference

Deaux, K. K., & Bieri, J. Latitude of acceptance in judgements of masculinity-femininity. Journal of Personality, 1967, 35, 109-117.

Table 1

All Objects Presented for Identification

by Percentage of Correct Gender Responses

	Name of Object	Percentage of Correct Responses Males[a]	Females[b]
1.	Electric skillet (casserole warmer)[f]	47.4	76.7
2.	Manicuring (cuticle) scissors	21.1	23.3
3.	Lawnmower	100.0	100.0
4.	Movie camera	94.7	86.7
5.	Electric sander[m]	63.2	36.7
6.	Pressure cooker	73.7	70.0
7.	Hacksaw and blades[m]	89.5	66.6
8.	Cassette player/recorder	100.0	100.0
9.	Measuring cup[f]	73.7	93.3
10.	Baby stroller	100.0	100.0
11.	Clock radio[n]	100.0	100.0
12.	Wratchet wrench with sockets[m]	94.7	50.0
13.	Eight-track cartridge player	100.0	100.0
14.	Chain (buzz) saw[m]	95.0	56.7
15.	Mixer	75.0	96.7
16.	Razor knife[n]	65.0	66.6
17.	Exercise bike	95.0	100.0
18.	Decanter (cruet)[f]	45.0	65.0
19.	Thimble	55.0	60.0

(Table 1 Continued)

20.	Heater (portable electric)	75.0	73.3
21.	Hex (key or Allen) wrenches[m]	80.0	13.3
22.	Ping pong table	100.0	100.0
23.	Staple gun	80.0	70.0
24.	Frying pan	75.0	83.3
25.	Electric drill	100.0	93.3
26.	Rocking chair	100.0	100.0
27.	Cheese board	75.0	96.7
28.	Hair (blow) dryer	85.0	96.7
29.	Lantern	100.0	100.0
30.	Two pliers	95.0	83.3
31.	Microscope	95.0	100.0
32.	(Tack) hammer	60.0	36.7
33.	Paring (peeler) knife[f]	35.0	60.0
34.	Jigsaw[m]	90.0	46.7
35.	Metal detector[m]	65.0	36.7
36.	(Meat or cheese) slicer	55.0	53.3
37.	Glassware	100.0	100.0
38.	Calculator	100.0	100.0
39.	(Open ended) wrenches	90.0	86.7
40.	Meat cleaver (butcher's knife)	85.0	63.3
41.	Playpen (crib)	95.0	96.7
42.	Barbell (weights)	95.0	93.3
43.	Salad bowl (set)[f]	30.0	63.3
44.	Tennis racket	95.0	100.0

(Table 1 Continued)

45.	Camping (portable) stove[m]	70.0	36.7
46.	Blender	95.0	100.0
47.	Spice rack	80.0	96.7
48.	Meat grinder	90.0	96.7
49.	Sleeping bag	90.0	96.7
50.	Coffee (perculator) pot	100.0	100.0
51.	Thermos jug	70.0	86.7
52.	Sewing machine	100.0	100.0
53.	Cooler (ice chest)	95.0	96.7
54.	Ironing board	100.0	100.0
55.	Vacuum cleaner	100.0	100.0
56.	Popcorn cooker	88.8	100.0
57.	Manicure set	100.0	95.0
58.	Goatskin wine gourd	55.5	45.0
59.	Automatic waffle maker	66.6	100.0
60.	Ice cream machine[f]	22.2	55.0
61.	Electric fondue set[f]	33.3	90.0
62.	Electric wok[f]	0.0	55.0
63.	Electric knife	100.0	100.0
64.	(Table-top) hair dryer	88.8	100.0
65.	Electric griddle (grill)	33.3	40.0

[a] $\underline{n}$ = 19 for objects 1-13, and $\underline{n}$ = 20 for objects 14-65.

[b] $\underline{n}$ = 30.

[f] Objects selected as female-appropriate for the test.

[m] Objects selected as male-appropriate for the test.

[n] Objects selected as being neutral for the test.

TABLE 2

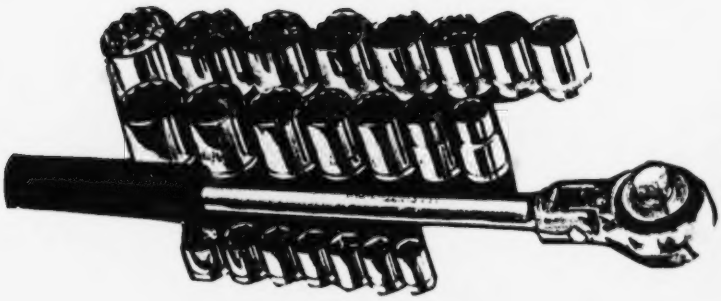
Subjects' Perception of the Purpose

of the Gender Object Identification Test by Sex

Reply Category	Male	Female	Totals
Sex-roles/stereotypes	4	16	20
Social class	3	2	5
Background	0	2	2
General knowledge	9	4	13
Semantic problems in identifying objects	2	1	3
Perception and/or reaction time	2	2	4
Don't know or didn't reply	0	3	3
Totals	20	30	50

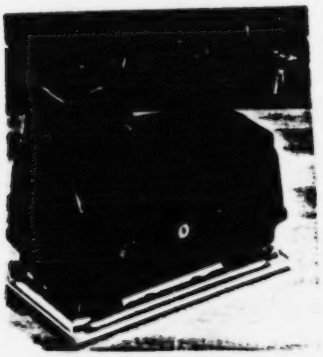
FIGURE 1

Object Identification Test
Form A

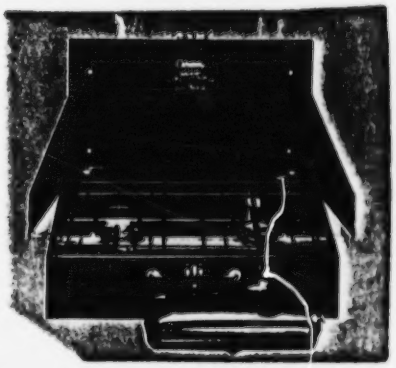


1. Wratchet wrench with sockets

2. Electric wok



3. Electric sander



4. Camping (portable) stove

5. Clock radio

6. Hacksaw and blades

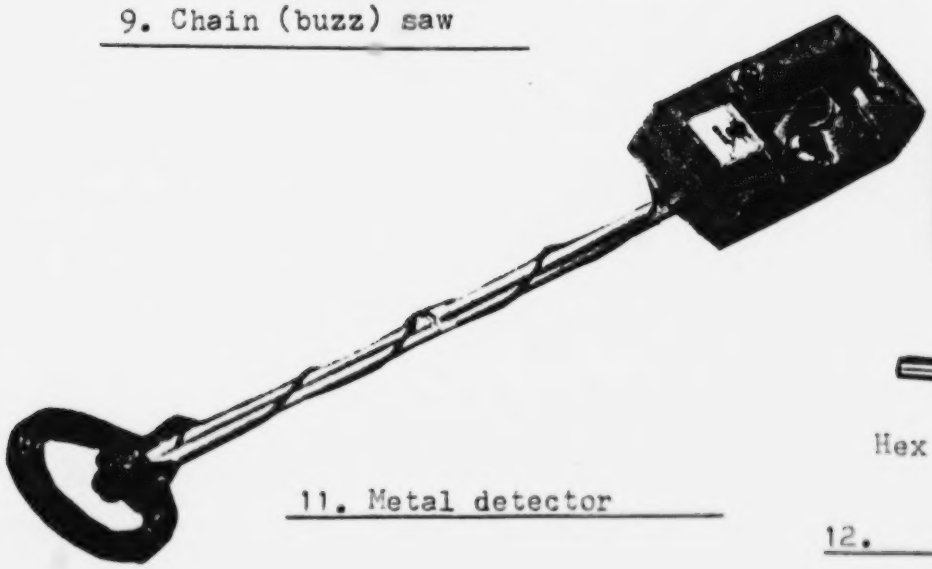
Form A - Continued

7. Razor knife

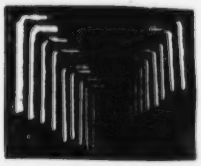
8. Jigsaw

9. Chain (buzz) saw

10. Measuring cup



11. Metal detector

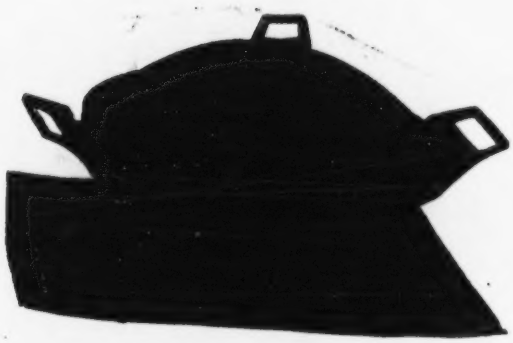


Hex (key or Allen) wrenches

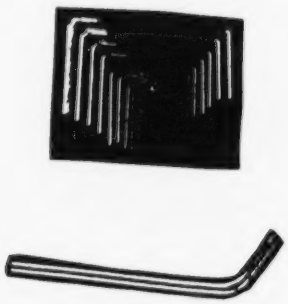
12.

FIGURE 2

Object Identification Test
Form B

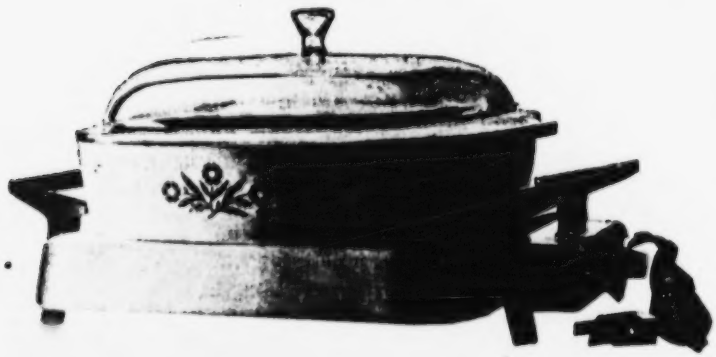


1. Electric wok



Hex (key or Allen) wrenches

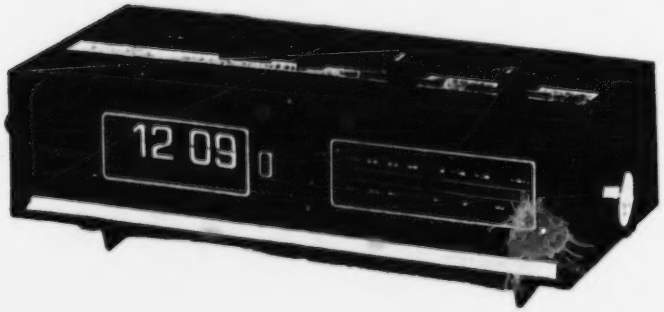
2.



Electric skillet
(or casserole warmer)

3.

4. Electric fondue set



5. Clock radio

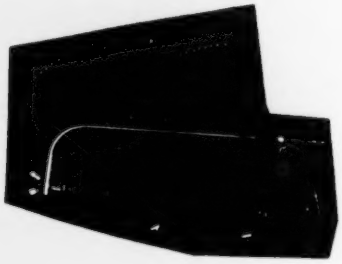
6. Salad bowl (set)

Form B - Continued

7. Razor knife

8. Ice cream machine

9. Decanter (cruet)



10. Hacksaw and blades

11. Measuring cup

12. Paring (peeler) knife